

PORTLAND, ME.
PRESS-HERALD
M - 56,603
TELEGRAM
S - 108,867

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Nobody Listened

The Central Intelligence Agency, favorite target for dissenters from campus to Congress, comes off rather well in the much disputed Pentagon papers which now seem to have a circulation only slightly less than that of the New York Times itself.

The whole intelligence community seems to have had better information and greater ability to interpret it than the policymakers who prevailed in the presidential councils.

In mid-1964, the CIA disputed the domino theory and declared that not all of Southeast Asia but probably only Cambodia would be endangered if South Vietnam and Laos fell to the Communists. The report was not heeded.

Later that same year, when bombing of North Vietnam was under consideration, the CIA, along with State Department Intelligence and the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency, said the proposed bombing would do little in the way of intimidating Hanoi.

CIA Director John A. McCone warned against combat troop commitment with the prediction that "we will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort we cannot win and from which we will have extreme difficulty extricating ourselves."

Undoubtedly intelligence has goofed up in some instances. But if more credence had been given to intelligence reports earlier, the opportunities for the later errors never would have arisen.